

Webcam and video tips for online and remote instruction

Quick reference guide

Overview

Making video content available for your students takes time, but it can be an effective means to convey information and connect with students. Below are some tips educators can take to get started in providing video content, whether that content is collected by webcam, smartphone, or digital video camera.

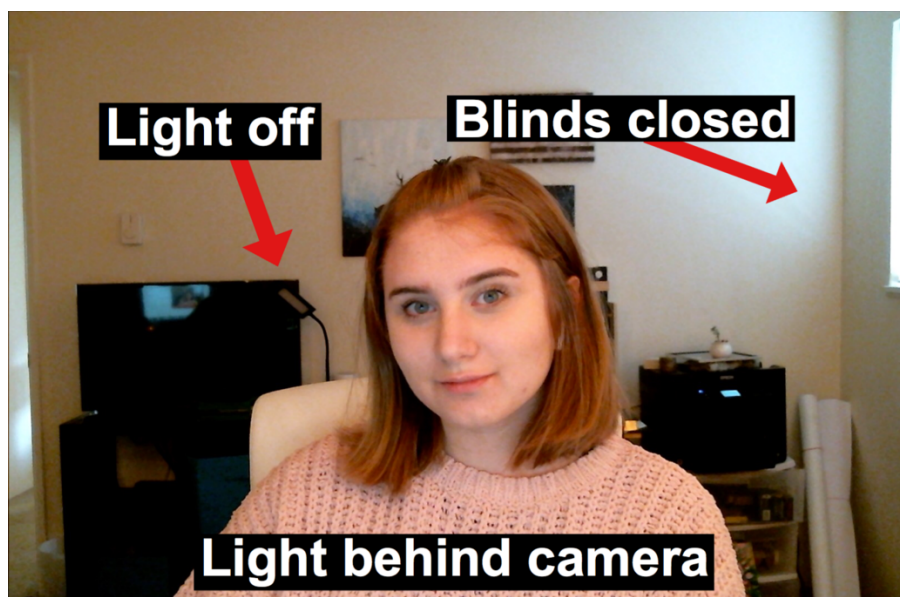
Since this document may not cover every issue you encounter while acclimating to do-it-yourself video recording, we recommend contacting your school's tech support person for additional troubleshooting.

Where to start

- **Check internet connection**
 - Wired connection via ethernet cable is best.
 - If a wired connection is not possible, having a clear line of sight to WiFi router will give the best wireless connection.
 - Disconnect any WiFi devices that are not in use or needed.
- **Check your computer**
 - Determine if your computer meets minimum system requirements for streaming software (See the Oregon State Ecampus [check your computer](#) page as an example.)
 - Close all non-essential programs to free up more computer resources
 - Disconnect any external monitors if you are on a laptop and it is running slowly
- **Check your tech**
 - Does your computer have a built-in webcam or do you have a third-party webcam?
 - Identify where your microphone is and talk toward it.
 - Test the webcam and audio settings **before** your first recording.
 - Practice, practice, practice! The last recording will be better than the first.
- **Check your recording quality**
 - Having a microphone helps with this
 - Smartphone earbuds have a built-in microphone that can help you with voice clarity
 - AirPods would also work when recording to an iPhone

Presence and environment

- Limit any background noise as much as possible.
- Clean up your space and be aware of what is in the background of the video.
- Rooms with carpets and drapes are best for audio.
- Turn off lights and close windows that are behind you when you are recording.
- If possible, turn on a light behind the camera.
- Keep experimenting with lighting until you have a set up that works for you.



More notes on creating a good filming environment

- Try not to bump the desk, computer, camera or microphone while recording. Avoid typing.
 - Do a test lecture and watch it. See what works and what doesn't. If possible, ask others for feedback.
 - Practice. The more you practice, the more natural it will feel.
 - Run through what you want to say before you start recording.
 - Relax and be natural. Hopefully you are sharing knowledge that you are passionate about, and students want that to show. (Remember that we are always our own worst critics, and your colleagues may be available to help you with constructive feedback.)
 - Have notes in front of you while you're recording. It is easy to get distracted or go off topic, especially when you are uncomfortable. Having notes in front of you while you record can help you stay on track.
 - These notes can be as vague or as detailed as you want, but avoid reading off of them directly and causing yourself to not look at the camera.
 - Remember that perfection is not required. Educators aren't perfect speakers in the classroom, and you don't need to be perfect speakers in recordings. Be yourself, just as you would in the classroom.
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